

From: Peter Oakford, Cabinet Member for Specialist Children's Services
Andrew Ireland, Corporate Director for Social Care, Health and Wellbeing

To: Scrutiny Committee - 8 March 2016

Subject: **CORPORATE PARENTING SELECT COMMITTEE REPORT – Action Plan & 3 Month Update**

Classification: Unrestricted

Past Pathway: Corporate Parenting Select Committee – 11 Nov 2015
Cabinet – 30 November 2015
County Council – 10 December 2015

Future Pathway: N/A

Electoral Division: All

Summary: The Corporate Parenting Select Committee conducted a review of Members role as elected corporate parents. The report made 15 recommendations for improving Members oversight role as corporate parents. The work underway to fulfil these recommendations are set out in the attached appendix.

Recommendations: The Committee is asked to:

- (i) **NOTE** the report and the attached appendix.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Corporate Parenting Select Committee was established in February 2015 to review Kent County Council's corporate parenting arrangements and to make recommendations for the improving of members' oversight of their role.
- 1.2. The launch of the Corporate Parenting Select Committee reflects the acknowledgment by the Council that it is time to restate the elected and officer corporate parent responsibilities. As such, it is important that the changes agreed by this Authority in order to improve the experiences and outcomes of our children in care are implemented successfully.
- 1.3. The report and recommendations were agreed by the Corporate Parenting Select Committee on the 11 November 2015 and this was endorsed by the County Council on the 10 December 2015. As required by the council's constitution, the Scrutiny Committee needs to be informed within 3 months of what action is being undertaken to deliver the recommendations.

2. Key Findings and Recommendations

- 2.1 The Select Committee Report discusses the key topics and issues that have the most significant impact on health, wellbeing and education of the children in our care. Each chapter highlights the key points and high-level responsibilities

that Members, as elected corporate parents should consider. The report also gives an account of the Kent picture for the main topics and issues considered. Three important questions are also addressed in the report, namely:

- What are we trying to achieve?
- What are we doing at present? and
- What more could be done?

2.2 The 15 main recommendations of the report aim to:

- Provide Members with a framework to ensure that they have a comprehensive understanding of their statutory responsibilities to the children within KCC's care.
- Ensure Members are aware of what they need to do and what questions they need to ask of officers in order to ensure KCC is doing the right things as an organisation to support and provide for its children and young people.
- Make sure KCC has the right systems and structures in place to fulfil its corporate parenting duties in the best and most effective way.
- Make certain that feedback from young people informs everything Kent does, from casework to organisational design and delivery.
- Strengthen the work KCC does with its partner agencies to ensure that the needs of Children in Care and care leavers are prioritised.

2.3 The detailed actions to deliver the 15 recommendations are set out in the attached appendix, which also gives an overview of progress in the first 3 months.

3. Conclusion

3.1 The Corporate Parent obligations that are legally placed on the Kent County Council require members and officers to work together along with partner agencies to ensure that children in care are well looked after. Scrutiny Committee's role in looking at the actions being taken to deliver this is an important part of ensuring our obligations are being met.

3.2 Following Scrutiny Committee's consideration, the next formal step will be a reconvening of the Select Committee to review progress after 12 months.

<p>4. Recommendations: Scrutiny Committee is asked to: (i) NOTE the report and the attached appendix.</p>

5. Report Author

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6. **Appendix:** Progress to Date, February 2016

7. Background Documents

Corporate Parenting Select Committee Report, December 2015
http://www.kent.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/51890/Corporate-Parenting-Select-Committee-report.pdf